

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 08800 271412Z

42

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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R 270823Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0271

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMCONGEN ASMARA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 8800

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, CASC, ET

SUBJECT: TENNECCO FOUR

REFERENCE: ADDIS 8664; STATE 162062

1. IN MEETING WITH FONMIN ZEWDE JULY 26 WHICH CANADIAN CHARGE GAUTHEIR AND UNDP REPRESENTATIVE PHILLIPS ALSO ATTENDED WE REVIEWED DEVELOPMENTS IN TENNECO CASE OVER LAST TWO MONTHS. I SAID TENNECO AND USG WERE GREATLY CONCERNED BY FAILURE OF ELF TO RESPOND EVER SINCE INTERMEDIARY WAS NOTIFIED JUNE 29 THAT IEG NEEDED TO KNOW ELF TOTAL DEMANDS FOR RELEASE OF ALL REMAINING HOSTAGES. IT SEEMED PROBABLE THAT DELAY WAS CAUSED BY INABILITY OF ELF LEADERS THUS FAR TO AGREE ON A FULL STATEMENT OF THEIR DEMANDS. WE HAD NOTED THAT QUESTION HAD BEEN ASKED BY INTERMEDIARY FROM TIME TO TIME WHETHER IEG HAD YET RELEASED THE FIVE ELF PRISONERS WHOSE RELEASE ELF HAD SAID SHOULD FOLLOW THEIR RELEASE OF MRS. DORTZBACH AND WEDERFORT. IT THEREFORE SEEMED ENTIRELY POSSIBLE THAT ONE ELEMENT IN FAILURE OF ELF LEADERSHIP TO AGREE ON THEIR NEXT STEP IS CONTENTION OF SOME OF THEIR HARDLINERS THAT A PRISONER RELEASE BY IEG MUST PRECEDE ANY FURTHER ACTION IN THIS CASE. FORMER PRIMIN ENDALKACHEW HAD INDICATED ON JULY 18 THAT THERE WOULD BE NO GREAT DIFFICULTY IN RELEASING TWO OR THREE OF FIVE PRISONERS NAMED BY ELF. TENNECO AND USG THEREFORE WISHED INQUIRE WHETHER IEG MIGHT NOW BE ABLE RELEASE TWO OR THREE OF

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THESE FIVE AS A MEANS OF SPEEDING UP PACE OF NEGOTIATIONS.

2. ZEWDE MADE PRELIMINARY COMMENT THAT ELF DELAY IN RESPONDING MIGHT ALSO BE DUE TO THEIR BELIEF IN LIGHT OF RECENT POLITICAL TURMOIL IN ETHIOPIA, INCLUDING ARREST OF ERITREAN GOVERNOR GENERAL, THAT THEY WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO WAIT FOR AWHILE, AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS. NEVERTHELESS HE THOUGHT THERE WAS MUCH MERIT IN SUGGESTION WHICH HAD JUST BEEN MADE. HE PROMISED TO WEEK ITS EARLY ADOPTION BY IEG AND TO INFORM US OF RESULTS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

3. ZEWDE' COMMENTS ON INTERNAL SITUATION, PARTICULARLY REGARDING ERITREA, BEING REPORTED IN SEPTTEL.
WYMAN

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NNN

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